

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated February 10, 2006. Claims 1, 4 to 8, 11 to 15 and 18 to 21 are in the application, of which Claims 1, 8 and 15 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4 to 8, 11 to 15 and 18 to 21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,891,632 (Schwartz) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,665,425 (Sampath). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Turning now to the claims, Claim 1 is directed to a print control method of a printer driver for performing print processing in an operation mode which is automatically determined from among a plurality of operation modes in response to a print request from an application program. The method comprises the steps of: generating print data in an intermediate condition and temporarily storing the generated print data, wherein said print data generating step is responsive to the print request from the application program, and wherein the intermediate condition is independent of a particular page description language; analyzing the temporarily stored generated print data; determining the operation mode from among the plurality of operation modes based on a selection criterion and based on the analysis in said print data analyzing step; processing the temporarily stored generated print data in accordance with the determined operation mode; displaying an evaluation screen for querying evaluation of a printing speed for the print processing of print produced by the print processing in a case where the evaluation information set in said setting step indicates that the operation mode is to be evaluated; acquiring an

evaluation result input by a user via the evaluation screen displayed in said displaying step; and updating the selection criterion for determining said operation mode based on the evaluation result acquired in said evaluation acquisition step.

In contrast, Schwartz discloses a technique in which a PDL Driver 37 analyzes data to be printed and generates a printing job in either form of PDL, an intermediate form or device-ready pixels, and transmits the job to a printer. Schwartz further discloses adjusting printing parameters for a printing system by performing test print of an initial pattern, scanning the printed paper and analyzing the output condition of the initial pattern in Sampath (column 6, lines 33 to 50, column 7, lines 7 to 49, and column 8, lines 1 to 20).

However, Schwartz fails to disclose or suggest a printer driver which determines one operation mode from a plurality of operation modes based on an analysis result and a selection criterion, performs a print processing by the operation mode determined based on the select criterion, then displays an evaluation screen for querying evaluation of a printing speed for the print processing, acquires the evaluation result inputted by a user via the evaluation screen displayed and updates the selection criterion based on the evaluation result, as featured in Claim 1.

Furthermore, Sampath discloses that an image quality defect recognition circuit outputs a set of metrics that qualify and quantify one or more defects, and/or image quality parameters. In addition, a diagnostic engine circuit outputs information pertaining to the operational status of a document processing system to a local user interface of a system and a local diagnostic server on a customer side. The set of metrics are generated

by performing a patch test. However, as featured in Claim 1, the selection criterion is the criterion for determining one operation mode from the plurality of operation modes such as an image mode, a PDL mode etc. That is, a system in accordance with Claim 1 does not print a predetermined test pattern, such as a patch test as in Sampath, but instead uses printing data from the application.

Furthermore, another feature of a system in accordance with Claim 1 is to update the selection criterion by the user evaluated time required to print. For example, if the user prefers printing speed improvements because the PDL mode requires a long time to print, the select criterion is updated to make the image mode more likely to be chosen in order to increase the printing speed in the next printing operation. Neither Schwartz nor Sampath discloses updating the selection criterion for determining the operation mode in order to improve the printing speed.

As neither Schwartz nor Sampath, neither alone nor in combination, disclose or suggest at least the feature of a printer driver which determines one operation mode from a plurality of operation modes based on an analysis result and a selection criterion, performs a print processing by the operation mode determined based on the select criterion, then displays an evaluation screen for querying evaluation of a printing speed for the print processing, acquires the evaluation result inputted by a user via the evaluation screen displayed and updates the selection criterion based on the evaluation result, Applicant submits that amended independent Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

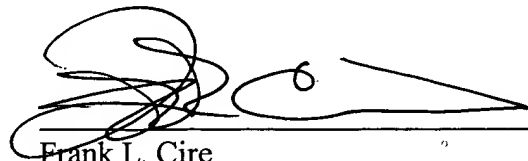
Amended independent Claims 8 and 15 are directed to an apparatus and a computer readable medium, respectively, substantially in accordance with the method of Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 8 and 15 are also now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank L. Cire', is written over a horizontal line.

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